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March 12, 2014

Dear CT PHC Testimony,

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee:

I write to ask you to strongly support and vote in the affirmative to add bill language for the modernization of the CT Naturopathic physician scope of practice to HB 5537. The language needs to be attached to this bill so it can come before the Public Health Committee for consideration. This Naturopathic scope of practice law is 90 years old and has not kept pace with the significant advances in education and training of Naturopathic doctors in the ensuing decades.

Naturopathic Physicians have been adequately trained to prescribe, use, and safely monitor the prescription drugs they are seeking. They receive 100hours of pharmacology training, a mere 8hours less than Doctors of Osteopathy (DO) , and 14 hours less than MD's. Jenson, C.B. Common Paths in Medical Education. Alternate &Complementary Therapies, Aug 1997.

To further support my belief that ND's are qualified to prescribe as proposed in the Bill HB5537 the following are segments from a document written by Christopher Winters, Director of the Office of Professional Regulation of the State of Vermont regarding the safety records of ND's: In 2006, the California Bureau of Naturopathic Medicine contacted the licensing agencies in all states that allow NDs to prescribe. None of these states reported any patient harm or disciplinary action due to ND prescribing, nor were there any civil actions against NDs for prescribing. They also contacted the Jury Verdicts Northwest (JVN), a legal database who records court cases in Washington and Oregon (2 states with the broadest prescriptive authority and largest number of NDs) -JVN reported no cases against NDs for prescriptive negligence, and added "for that matter our database contained no cases against naturopaths at all," and they noted there were no judgments for malpractice against ND's from 1983, when the database was started, through 2010.

In addition, implementation of Bill HB5537 will:

- improve patient care for Connecticut residents
- offer the ability to fill the Primary Care Physician deficit currently present in the state of CT
- decrease duplication of medical services by decreasing the cost, inconvenience, and time to, me, the patient; as well as decreasing the cost to insurance companies and state funded medical plans.
- ensure the safety of Connecticut residents with respect to the potential drug interactions with some natural treatments, such as herbs, based on the extensive education an ND receives in botanical medicine and pharmacognosy
- allow the Naturopathic Doctoral didactic and clinical education program offered at University of Bridgeport to keep pace with the national educational trend and scope of practice enjoyed by other states such as: Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Arizona, Oregon, Washington State, Hawaii, Kansas, Montana, Idaho, Utah, and the District of Columbia.

- afford Naturopathic Doctors a greater opportunity to co-ordinate patient care, collaborate with Medical Doctors, as well as other types of clinicians
- update the hugely antiquated Naturopathic Physician laws, bring Connecticut up to pace with the modern education of today's Naturopathic Doctors.

Thank you for your support and consideration.

Sincerely,
Laura Munro